

body just gives out and drops. Do not expect that to be anytime soon.

I believe all ages and all occupations should be part of a truly representative body. I also believe society works best when the energy and idealism of youth, youth, youth, pairs with the experience and wisdom of age.

America is the land of opportunities. I don't think our some 36 million citizens over the age of 65 are disqualified from participating in the life of the country that we—we—helped to build. Our country rejected those kinds of arbitrary barriers long ago, and this Senator loudly and proudly rejects them now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Alaska is recognized.

#### BRIGADIER GENERAL KEN TAYLOR

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to BG Ken Taylor, who will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery later this afternoon.

From his service as a pilot during World War II to his tenure as Commander of the Alaska Air National Guard, General Taylor was always a hero—in every sense of the word, and to all who knew and loved him.

As a young boy in Oklahoma, Ken set his sights on becoming a pilot. After completing high school and 2 years of college, Ken fulfilled his dream by joining the Army Air Corps.

In April 1941, newly commissioned as a second lieutenant, Ken received his first assignment. He was stationed at Wheeler Field, on the Hawaiian island of Oahu, as a member of the 47th Pursuit Squadron. And it was there, during one of the darkest days in our Nation's history, that Ken's bravery shined brightest.

Early in the morning on December 7, 1941, after a long night of poker, dancing, and a little drinking at the officer's club, Ken awoke to the sound of low flying Japanese aircraft fighters and bombers on course to attack the Navy's Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor.

Ken and fellow pilot George Welch, who was staying in a neighboring apartment, took immediate action. They called ahead to their air crew with instructions to load their P-40s with fuel and ammunition.

Both pilots hurriedly pulled their evening wear back on, and sped off in Ken's new Buick toward Haleiwa Field. Dodging Japanese strafing runs and driving at speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour, they soon arrived at the airfield. The pair quickly strapped into their P-40 Tomahawks, which were fully fueled but only partially armed.

Outnumbered, outgunned, and without orders, the two pilots taxied to the runway intent on engaging the over 300 unchallenged Japanese aircraft.

Once airborne, Ken and George immediately came under fire. Ken later described the ensuing combat as "shooting fish in a barrel"—a definite understatement, as the Japanese shot

back at their pursuers. At least one round hit Ken's cockpit, embedding shrapnel in his arm and leg.

Determined to stay in the air as long as possible, Ken and George attacked a group of bombers until they ran out of ammunition. The pair then landed at Wheeler Field to resupply and refuel.

While an air crew rearmed their planes, the duo received a dressing down from a superior officer for taking off without orders. The officer also insisted they stay on the ground, but when another attack forced airfield personnel to scatter, Ken and George took the chance to get back into the fight.

With a fresh supply of .50 caliber ammunition, Ken positioned himself on the runway to take off just as a group of dive bombers flew overhead. He described his second takeoff to Army Times as follows:

I took off right toward them, which gave me the ability to shoot at them before I even left the ground. I got behind one of them and started shooting again. The only thing I didn't know at that time was that I got in the middle of the line rather than the end. There was somebody on my tail. They put a bullet right behind my head through the canopy and into the trim tab inside. So I got a little bit of shrapnel in my leg and through the arm. It was of no consequence; it just scared the hell out of me for a minute.

Before the last fires were extinguished from the remains of the Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor, Ken Taylor and George Welch had shot down at least eight Japanese fighters. Many believe their decision to take to the air prevented a full assault on Haleiwa, saving the field from sure destruction. By the end of the day, the two lieutenants had become America's first heroes of World War II—all while wearing tuxedo pants and a Hawaiian flower-print shirt.

For his tremendous courage under fire, Ken received the Distinguished Service Cross and a Purple Heart. But his service to this Nation was far from finished. Ken went on to fight at Guadalcanal, where he was credited with destroying another Japanese plane. After a broken leg ended his combat career, Ken returned stateside and served for 27 more years. He served in the Alaska Air National Guard.

In 1967, Ken became the Assistant Adjutant General for the Alaska Air National Guard. Before retiring in 1971, he was promoted to Brigadier General and served as the full Commander of the Air Guard.

In this capacity, Ken quickly distinguished himself as an able and respected leader. He worked closely with MG C. F. Necrason, then the Adjutant General of the Alaska National Guard, to save the Air Guard component in our State. Under Ken's direction, the reinvigorated Air Guard units provided rural Alaskans with access to health care, medivacs, and disaster relief services.

As a Senator for Alaska, it was my privilege to work with Ken on many occasions during this period. My wife

Catherine's father, Bill Bittner, Sr., was a close friend of Ken's and his fishing partner. Bill and I often spent long summer days fishing with Ken and talking about World War II.

To this day, Ken's family has strong ties to Alaska. Ken's son, Ken Jr., followed in his father's footsteps and also became commander of the Alaska Air National Guard. They remain the only father and son in our Nation's history to have achieved such an honor. Also, Ken Sr.'s grandson, Eric Taylor, now serves in the Alaska Air National Guard with distinction.

The remarkable story of Ken Taylor reminds me of a statement once made by General George Marshall. Asked if America had a secret weapon to help win World War II, General Marshall replied in the affirmative. He said we had "the best darn kids in the world."

One can't help but wonder if these words were partly inspired by Ken Taylor, who, at age 21, exemplified great courage and bravery during the battle that drew America into World War II. For those who remember, his was one of the two planes that took off in the movie entitled "Pearl Harbor."

It gives me great pride to have known this man. On this solemn day when we put him to rest, let us all take a moment to reflect on the life—and honor the memory—of this great American hero.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri is recognized for 10 minutes.

#### HOMAGE TO SENATOR BYRD

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, first, let me pay homage to the senior Senator from West Virginia who, in a typically eloquent way, spoke to the Senate about his long service to his State. Let me tell the people of West Virginia, they don't need to worry; they have a very strong Senator in this body. Any comments about his age are misplaced, because his passion and his intellectual heft and his knowledge of history and the Constitution far outweigh any considerations one would have about his age.

(The remarks of Mrs. MCCASKILL pertaining to the introduction of S. 1723 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

#### PROGRESS ON S. 1

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, there are times since I have been here that I have been surprised and shocked. This week was one of them, when I saw the leader of my party rise to ask the body to send S. 1 to conference. Keep in mind what S. 1 is. S. 1 was the first piece of legislation we passed in the Senate this year. That is why it is called S. 1. Keep in mind what the vote was. It was 96 to 2. There are not going to be very many times that we do anything 96 to 2. That was months ago.